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ABSTRACT

The Adult Education Component of the Delta Opportunities Corporation (DOC) operated learning centers in four Mississippi delta counties for educationally disadvantaged rural poor adults. The centers served an excess of 200 participants, preparing them for General Education Development Tests (GED) and providing prevocational and adult basic education classes. The program is discussed in terms of personnel, historical background, planning and teacher training, problems encountered, program services and activities, student and learning center achievements, and program projections and recommendations. The Manpower Development Component (Project Jobs 1972) of DOC was designed to give technical assistance and guidance to rural underprivileged people between the ages of 18 and 55, in their quest to upgrade their economic and social status through vocational training and industrial placement. Following a summary and presentation of recommendations, Project Jobs 1972 is further discussed in terms of personnel, problems encountered, project activities (recruitment, prevocational counseling, assessment, orientation, voational training, on-the-job training and placement, and counseling and followup), and a chart of project achievements. The third party evaluation indicated that the two projects were generally successful, but that Project Jobs was hampered by insufficient funds. (BP)

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FINAL REPORT

Delta Opportunities Corporation

Adult Basic Education

and

Manpower Development Program

1971-1972

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ADULT BASIC EDUCATION COMPONENT

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FINAL REPORT

ADULT BASIC EDUCATION

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SUMMARY

The Adult Education component of Delta Opportunities Corporation (DOC) operated Learning Centers in four (4) of the nine (9) counties that DOC is chartered to operate. The four (4) counties that housed Learning Centers were Bolivar, Madison, Tallahatchie and Yazoo counties. The present program in order to improve the quality, structured its activities to comply as close as possible with recommendations from the previous year's final report. The program was concentrated from nine (9) centers to four (4) centers to enhance the effectiveness of the program. In addition to the concentration of centers, the new Learning Center approach was also undertaken. In an effort to coordinate our activities with other existing adult education programs, cooperative projects were operated jointly with Mississippi Delta Council for Farm Workers Opportunities, Inc. (MDC/FWOI), Clarksdale, Mississippi and Quitman County Centers for Learning (QCCL), Marks, Mississippi.

The centers served an excess of 200 participants during the year. These 200 people being primarily seasonal farm workers, unskilled, and with low economic and educational backgrounds.

The Adult Education program was conducted by an executive director, one supervisor, four (4) center directors, six (6) teachers and two (2) recruiters. In some instances teachers

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and recruiters were used interchangeably. Classes were held about six (6) hours averagely. Some centers conducted night classes. Others were held during the day. In addition to the basic education curriculum of reading, writing, arithmetic, consumer education and the social sciences, preparation for the General Education and Development (GED) test and pre-vocational education were also taught. Evaluation was done through using the Adult Basic Learning Examination (ABLE), supervisor visitations, and teacher evaluations.

Teachers were trained through an in-service program and by attending regional and national adult education workshops.

After careful evaluation of the year's program it has been established that: (1) the Learning Center approach is more effective than the regular ABE center approach; (2) that the cooperative program venture enhances the scope and latitude of adult education; (3) indigenious participants learn at a faster rate with para-professional aides; (4) that vocational related material enhances learning among individuals of low income backgrounds; and (5) that with some form of transportation allowance the average daily attendance is much higher.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Upon evaluation and, as is evident, through accomplishments stated above, the program has been successful and has made certain headways and undertaken certain projects that

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should be continued. In that vein the Adult Basic Education Department of DOC sets forth the following recommendations:

1. that professional center directors be utilized in learning centers;
2. that an adequate budget allowance be alloted to operate adult education learning centers;
3. that more multi-program projects be undertaken;
4. that learning centers be equipped adequately with, sufficient flatware and audio-visual aids for a good individualized instruction program;
5. that centers working with adult opportunity be geared toward vocational education and/or job placement.

PERSONNEL

The Adult Basic Education staff consist of an executive director, one (1) ABE supervisor, four (4) learning center directors, six (6) teachers, and two (2) recruiters. (See Chart I)

The executive director was responsible for the overall supervision of the program. He was responsible for negotiating cooperative efforts among other existing ABE programs, initiating and seeking new programs and program funds, and the overall coordination of the entire project.

The ABE supervisor designed and coordinated the ABE and GED program in the respective counties. This person designed and recommended the curriculum material, supervised the actual operation of the centers, designed and implemented teacher training workshop sessions, wrote and designed new program material, made evaluations of local center operation and

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worked closely with center directors and teachers in implementing and assuring a smooth running operation.

The learning center directors supervised teaching and, in some cases, assisted in the actual teaching of participants. They also had the responsibility of coordinating efforts in the center with the local community.

The teachers were responsible for the actual teaching in the centers. All teachers were para-professionals and indigenes of the local populace.

Recruiters were responsible for recruiting participants for the learning centers. In many instances recruiters and teachers were used interchangeably. In areas where only part-time recruiters were needed, these persons served as teacher/recruiters. (See Chart II)

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The DOC Adult Education program served as indigenous populace in the Mississippi Delta that heretofore had not had the opportunity to avail themselves of educational opportunities. These participants, spreading over a four (4) county area and numbering an excess of 200, were the seasonal farm workers who were in desperate need of educational advancement that would aide in their quest to break the severe bonds of poverty.

The Mississippi Delta is presently an area that has undergone an economic structural change in the last five (5) years. The change from principally manual labor to complete mechanization has displaced the majority of poor rural farmers,

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pushing them into an educational arena where it is impossible for them to compete. The transition from the plantation to nearby towns has been very difficult and in some cases impossible for this segment of the population. Jobs were impossible to find for most because of their non-skilled, uneducated status. The inadequate welfare system, as it exists in Mississippi, proved of very little assistance. Meager and underpaid seasonal work was all that was left for this underprivileged portion of society. These people could not raise themselves by their bootstraps.

For this group DOC designed and operated an Adult Education program specifically to help bridge the gap and provide real alternatives for individuals who were heretofore denied that opportunity.

Results of the program as compared with existing conditions at the beginning of the project; over 200 persons with either:

(1) Adult Basic Education
(2) the GED Certificate
(3) institutional training
(4) vocational training and/or
(5) jobs

PLANNING AND TEACHER TRAINING

Planning

The overall planning for the education program was done by the ABE supervisor. All personnel working with the

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program had had some prior experience with ABE. Therefore, much of the actual lessons planned were done by center directors and teachers themselves with only directives from the supervisor.

Planning was of course, always done in coordination with local center personnel so that material planned would meet the needs of the individuals served. Because of the new job development component, teachers also taught pre-vocational education in the local learning centers. A pre-vocational curriculum outline and lesson plans were designed by the ABE supervisor and implemented by teachers.

In addition to internal staff planning, two (2) consultants in curriculum development were engaged by the program to aide the staff in this area. The two (2) consultants were a dual program venture with the consultants being engaged by both DOC and QCCL.

First Consultant: The first consultant was Mrs. Ernestine Boclair, of Grenada, Mississippi. Mrs. Boclair, an Adult Education Doctoral student at Florida State University, conducted curriculum development consultation sessions with curriculum development staff members from DOC and QCCL August 26 - September 2, 3, & 8, 1971.

The objectives established for the sessions were (1) identify any curriculum material and guides that have been done with emphasis on rural blacks; (2) to identify with specificity items that needed developing under the main heading already part of the curriculum of DOC; (3) to identify

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publications and sources of curriculum development materials; and (4) to identify a reliable initial placement test for rural poor people.

After working with the staff and guided by the above objectives, Mrs. Boclair made the following recommendations as suggestions for development during the year:

1. Establish monthly or bi-monthly training sessions to systematically work on curriculum and other program areas;

2. Limit participation in these sessions to the supervisory staff which, in turn, would train the teachers in the use of innovations developed. This method will reinforce the learning of the supervisory staff as they internalize their learning experiences;

3. Begin and develop a professional development library to be made available to each staff member;

4. Serious consideration should be given to establishing a learning center, as suggested by a staff member, to develop and improve skills in which community residents had indicated an interest. This innovation would provide a vehicle for the utilization of community volunteers and appreciably cut the cost to the project.

The above recommendations were followed as close as possible and the majority of them used by the program to desirable degrees of satisfaction. The recommendations used successfully were numbers one (1), three (3) and four (4). A look at the summary will readily point out how recommendations were used and how profitable they were for the program.

Second Consultant: The second consultant was Mr. Edgar M. Easley, Associate Director of Communication and Education Services, Inc., Los Angeles, California.

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Through intense group discussions and interaction with curriculum staff members Mr. Easley made the following recommendations for the program in these specific areas:

1. General Vocational Curriculum
2. General ABE Curriculum
3. Home Study Materials

His recommendations were as follows:

1. The self-rating questionnaires should be used used regularly for a two-month period, covering a two-week period for each administration. Staff should then check to see if each one has moved further along. This should be done both by staff and students. It is important that each person keep a record of his own progress but review each of the records in terms of his own changes.

2. New lessons in home study should be written and tried out on selected students. These lessons should cover book one, and a general meeting of tutors should be given before the lessons are distributed explaining each lesson.

3. For students studying on-site ABE lessons should be developed around their interests. These lessons should be built around the first levels of ABE skills: word endings; simple spelling; vocabulary; and visual consonance.

4. The pre-vocational classes should be restructured so that the students can engage in student-student teaching. This is important to conserve the efforts of the instructor. Performance should be geared to some performance standards, and a simple set of these should be developed for each area of the curriculum, preferably on the lowest job entry skills. In this matter, visits to sites where entry level employment is available and a list of all skills needed for such entry should be made. This list should be developed in order of difficulty.

5. Staff training should progress with each member of the staff responsible for a specific area of the curriculum:

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home study
pre-vocational
ABE
high interest subjects

At each staff meeting, the staff should then take his speciality and do the following:

1. Acquaint the staff on what is going on in his field;

2. Ask for feedback as to how his speciality assists his work;

3. Demonstrate how one of the lessons is being taught and used by the students.

6. Attention should be closely paid to certain program goals.

7. Follow-up be given in November with the consultant returning to review the following items:

Progress in ABE lesson construction;
Progress in home study lesson construction;
Progress in self-rating questionnaire usuage;
Consonance with established program goals (these are either found in the project proposal or are extrapolated from them).

The recommendations from Mr. Easley were followed as close as possible. However, a subsequent program change made most of the recommendations unprofitable to pursue during this program year.

Teaching Training

In-Service: In-service adult education workshops were designed and implemented by the ABE supervisor. The workshops were held bi-weekly through-out the program lasting four (4) hours for each session. The sessions were designed to teach teachers to teach ABE. All phases of the curriculum were covered in the workshops with emphasis being placed on a different discipline or different phase of disci-

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pline in each session. The workshops were conducted with an informal setting, and the maximum amount of participation and interaction from teachers was the paramount objective for the majority of the sessions. Hypothetical classroom situations were simulated and teachers were observed dealing with the situations. Recommendations could then be made and ideas and innovations enhanced. In addition to staff prepared activities resource persons were engaged to conduct workshops in the social services areas, such as social security, welfare and manpower training.

Along with the fact that the workshops enhanced the caliber of teaching and teachers in the education program, para-professionals were also, as a result of the training, raised to higher academic levels. Many para-professionals with the program, because of program change and also at the end of the program, were seeking new jobs. As a direct result of training with our program individuals were able to gain employment as teachers in related programs and others have made application as teacher-aides in local school systems.

Institutional: The entire education staff attended an adult education workshop held at Mary Holmes Junior College, West Point, Mississippi. This workshop was a joint training session with QCCL, Marks, Mississippi. The workshop was designed by a joint committee from the two staffs (DOC & QCCL). Emphasis was placed on reading, English, and math. The staffs were given lectures and demonstrations by staff members of Mary Holmes Junior College, Dr. Ted Pinnock, Director, Human

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Resource and Development Center, Tuskegee, Alabama and the professional staff members of DOC & QCCL. Being designed by the two programs involved (DOC & QCCL), the workshop successfully met goals and objectives set forth that the two programs had a specific need to have addressed. All participants received a certificate citing successful completion of the workshop session.

Six (6) members of the Adult Education staff of DOC attended regional and national workshops at three (3) accredited universities across the South. The supervisor and one (1) teacher attended a regional adult education workshop entitled "Adult Education with Emphasis on the Black Rural Adult". The conference was held at Nicholas State University, Thibodaux, Louisiana. The workshop lasted three weeks and offered college credit and certificates citing successful completion of the course. Participants received invaluable information, new approaches, new ideas and a chance for interaction with teachers, supervisors, para-professionals and state regional and federal officials and personnel in adult education projects from six other Southern states.

Two (2) teachers attended a three week workshop at Alabama State University in Montgomery, Alabama. The workshop in Alabama was a national workshop made up of representatives from across the country engaged in ABE.

Two (2) teachers attended another regional three week adult education workshop at the University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia. Participants were given very valuable

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material in ABE, taken on tours of local adult education projects and given the opportunity to interact with persons involved in adult education across the country.

The main purpose for having principally para-professionals attend these workshops was to get a cross-section of ABE techniques of different areas. Because all of the curriculum development personnel were not able to attend these various workshops, teachers were able to assist the curriculum personnel in the development of new and improved lessons which would involve more relevency to ABE per se.

It was also a delegation of authority of management to allow para-professionals to become a part of the program's research effort in developing materials which would meet the needs and life styles of the target groups.

A new and very effective approach to adult education was instituted as a direct result of these individuals having attended the various workshops. Several of the teachers and the supervisors were introduced to the learning center approach to ABE and were able to bring back and successfully implement the first learning center in the Mississippi Delta.

PROBLEMS

With the program change from regular ABE centers and a correspondence course to the learning center concept, the greatest problem was that of sufficient equipment for the learning center itself. The learning center concept proposes a variety of learning situations simultaneously.

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To accomplish this material for individual instructions is very important. The program was not able to purchase any audio-visual material designed for individualized instructional purposes.

Another problem was that, except the centers where multi-program funds were in operation, professional center directors could not be hired. Therefore, in half of the centers para-professionals were utilized as center directors. Para-professionals make very good teachers of adult education because of their ability to relate to the indigence populace. However, in the administrative position of center director, their lack of training in the administrative field did not allow for a smooth transition from teacher to director. The expertise of a professional in this position is invaluable for adequate program operations and evaluations.

Because of the vastness of some counties the program was not able to serve all interested participants. Program funds would not allow for the location of more than one center per county. It became imperative for many students to drop-out because of the long distance they had to travel to and from centers. Participants expressed the desire to attend ABE classes that lived thirty (30) and forty (40) miles away from the existing center. Even in instances where these participants qualified for a stipend with cooperative programs, the distance that they lived from the existing center made it too difficult for them to participate.

Another very real and pressing problem was that of the inability to get and retain sufficient professional for

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the program. With the program being funded on a year-to-year basis, it is difficult to secure professionals in key slots because of poor job security as a built in segment of the position.

In most instances, each year a project must hire a different director because the previous director has been diverted to a job that offers tenure and other fringe benefits that are important for a smoothly operated project.

This kind of pressure and insecurity would be eliminated if the project was funded on a three-year basis allowing for job security thereby allowing concentration on programmatic activities rather than securing a job.

PROGRAM SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

The learning centers were designed to meet the individual needs and desires of the people involved. Pre-vocational counseling, GED preparatory classes, and adult basic education classes were the main activities of the centers. However, where the need or desire was expressed, other actitivies such as information from public service agencies, special sewing classes, handcrafts classes, and cabinet making classes were brought into the centers.

Most students were stipend and others attended on voluntary basis. Because of the fact that DOC was not funded to stipend students, coordinated activities were made with Mississippi Delta Council (MDC) of Clarksdale, Mississippi, another adult opportunity program. This program paid stipend to the students who met their guidelines. The students

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were interviewed by a team from MDC to determine their eligibility for stipend. The amount of the stipend varied according to the number of dependents. Students received $30.00 per week and $2.50 per dependent up to three.

This effort of coordination came about because MDC was chartered to operate in the same counties as DOC. Therefore rather than to duplicate activities, decisions were made to work cooperatively for a more successful operation especially in the Bolivar County and Tallahatchie County centers. These centers are made mention of because in the Madison and Yazoo county centers MDC only paid stipend to the students. However, in Tallahatchie and Boliver counties they had an equal share of the expenses. These two centers were the only two to have professional center directors.

The Tallahatchie Center was even more of an unique center in that it was the model center of the learning center concept. This was a tri-program operation, MDC, DOC and QCCL worked cooperatively to operate this center.

The teacher, center coordinator, and/or job developer held pre-vocational counseling sessions with the students in pre-vocational training to identify their needs and desires. Through these sessions students were helped to choose a vocational trade to meet their qualifications. In some cases the students worked to make their qualifications meet the need of the vocational trade they desired. When the student's needs and desires, as it related to a vocational trade, were clearly defined, the center coordinator

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and/or job developer searched for training sites of job placements for the students. By this method students were placed on full time jobs, in vocational training schools and in institutional training.

GED preparatory students were taught in the classroom. Students who scored 8.0 or above on the Level II ABLE were considered GED students. When their minds had been cultivated to the level where as they and the teacher felt that they were able to pass the GED test, appointments were made for the test to be taken. Several students took and passed the GED test and received a certificate equivalent to a high school diploma. After having passed the GED test some students were making plans for enrolling in college, and others put in applications for jobs which required a high school diploma.

Colleges across the Mississippi Delta were utilized as centers for administering the test. Such colleges were Coahoma Junior College, Clarksdale, Mississippi; Delta State College, Cleveland, Mississippi; Mississippi Valley State College, Itta Bena, Mississippi and Millsaps College, Jackson, Mississippi.

In adult basic education the students were given the Level I ABLE as a criteria for determining their level of placement. The students were placed on three levels according to the score reflected on their ABLE. If a student scored 5.5 or above, he was given the Level III ABLE. If a student's score was 8.0 or above, he was placed in the GED preparatory group. The students could graduate to a higher level at any time of the

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year if they had progressed enough to meet the educational standards of that level. This served as a motivational technique to inspire the students to improve their educational standards. In addition to the ABLE, students were given teacher-made quizzes from their classroom work as a means of measuring student progress. The students played educational games such as password and monopoly as a means of entertainment and at the same time improved their thinking ability.

The sewing classes, handcraft classes, and cabinet making classes were a special attraction to the centers. The students themselves served as teachers. Those who owned sewing machines and knew how to sew brought their machines to the centers and shared them and their knowledge of sewing with other students. This proved to be a very effective teaching technique. Because of the students' high rate of interest they learned rapidly how to read and follow the instructions on their patterns. It also helped them to save money because the simple clothing that they once bought, they were now able to make. The handcraft and cabinet making classes proved helpful to the students because they learned to make items for their homes.

Files were kept on each student. All information of importance to the centers concerning the student was kept in the student's individual folder.

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STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Adult Basic Learning Examination

The Adult Basic Learning Examination (ABLE) was used as the major measuring device for student achievement in ABE. The test was administered twice during the year at all centers. Level I and II of Form A were used to evaluate student progress. The results of testing are showing in accompanying charts:

THE MEAN SCORE FOR ALL CENTERS

COUNTIES	1ST TEST	LAST TEST	TOTAL AVERAGE MEAN
BOLIVAR	4.8	8.4	6.6
MADISON	3.9	4.2	4.0
TALLAHATCHIE	4.4	8.1	6.2
YAZOO	3.9	5.5	4.8

NO. OF STUDENTS ABOVE AND BELOW THE MEAN IN COUNTIES

COUNTIES	MEAN	ABOVE	BELOW	MEAN	ABOVE	BELOW
BOLIVAR	4.8	21	11	8.4	18	5
TALLAHATCHIE	3.9	8	12	4.2	10	8
YAZOO	4.4	17	16	8.1	9	3
MADISON	3.9	24	23	5.5	12	8

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ACHIEVEMENT BY CENTER

COUNTIES	1ST	LAST	GRADE POINT ACHIEVEMENT
BOLIVAR	4.8	8.4	3.6
TALLAHATCHIE	4.4	8.1	3.7
YAZOO	3.9	5.5	1.6
MADISON	3.9	4.2	.3

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PROGRAM PROJECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After having spent $150.000.00 to operate a program that would give adults the opportunity to upgrade their educational level and their job skills, we feel knowledgeable of their needs in adult education and job development and means of satisfying those needs. Such knowledge was acquired through basic conclusions as pointed out in the adult education and job development components.

Both components of the program, adult basic education and job development, have been discussed separately and in details so that each could be properly presented. Their achievements and their failures were clearly stated. It was through their acheivements and even more so their failures that the urgent needs for the continuation of this program was recognized. The program's great potentials were shown through the acheivements, and the fact that the failures were identified, studied, and possible solutions to rectify them were made justifies the need for this program in the Mississippi Delta for a longer period of time.

Because of the fact that we have dealt with adult opportunity programs for three years and know the needs of rural poor people, we feel highly qualified to make the following recommendations for a more effective adult opportunity program:

1. That programs be adequately funded to operate effectively in all designated areas;

2. That closer coordination of activities with other public service agencies be instituted;

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3. That closer coordination of efforts be established with other adult opportunity programs;

4. That programs not be operated for the sake of adult basic education alone but with the aim of alleviating poverty;

5. That programs be equipped to operate multi-projects;

6. That programs be funded on a three year basis because of the instability of a one year funded operation.

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CHART I

PROFILE ON TEACHING STAFF

AGE	NO.
18-25	6
26-31	3
32-38	1
39-50	1
Over 50	1
Total	12

SEX	NO.
Male	6
Female	6
Total	12

EDUCATION	NO.
Below High School	2
High School	2
Some College	6
Degree	2
Total	12

WORK EXPERIENCE	NO.
No Experience in ABE	4
Experience in ABE	8
Total	12

MARITAL STATUS	NO.
Single	6
Married	6
Divorced	0
Widowed	0
Total	12

CHART II

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART ABE

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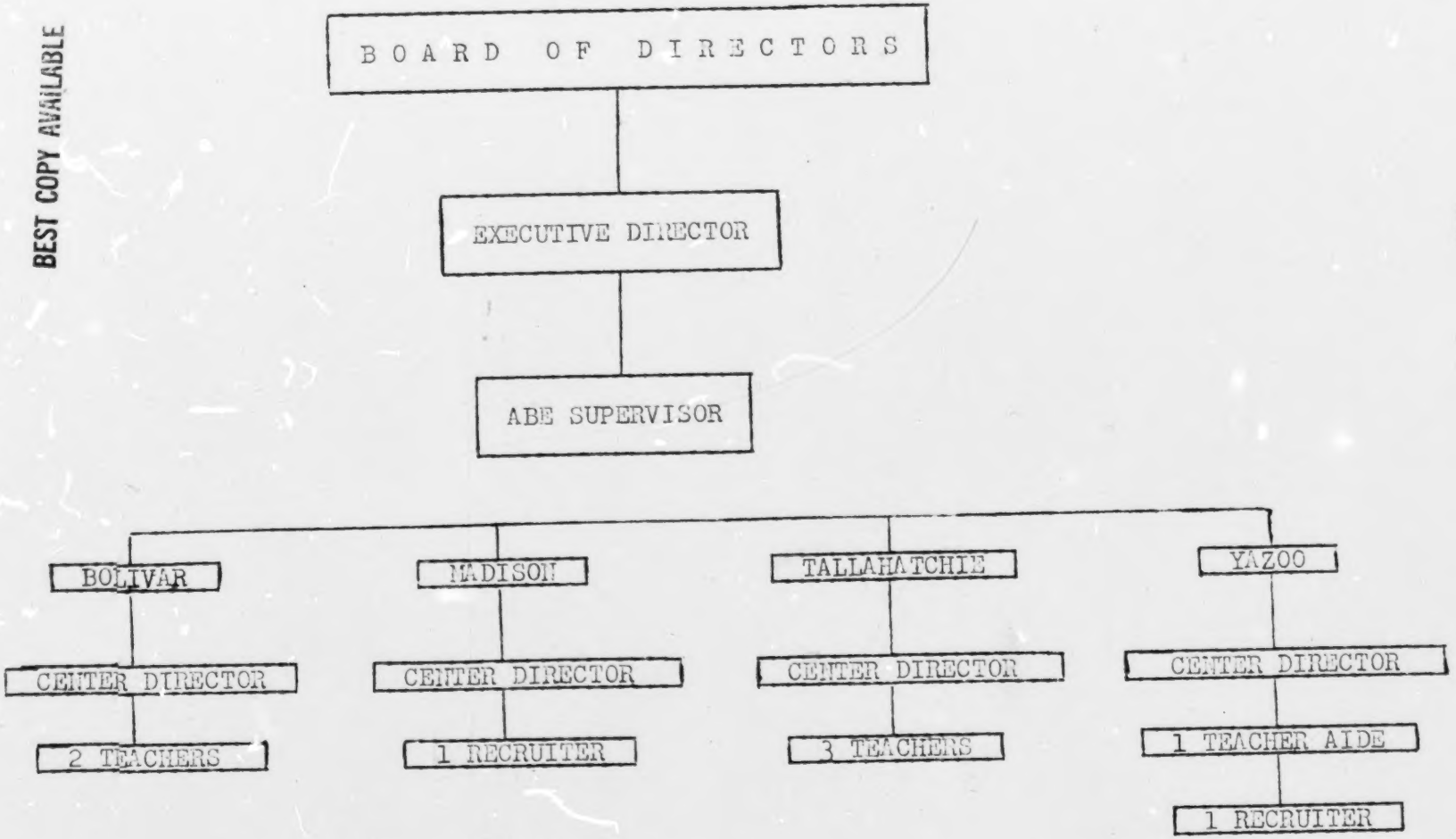

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PROJECT JOBS 1972

SUMMARY AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

This project was implemented in a nine county area of the Mississippi Delta. The counties were Bolivar, Issaquena, Leflore, Madison, Sharkey, Sunflower, Tallahatchie, Washington and Yazoo. The 1970 census reveals that 287,000 people live in this nine county area and that more than fifty percent (50%) live in a state of severe poverty. The predominate way of life in this area is farming, and for the past century the plantation system has provided a meager seasonal income for persons living in this area. Farm mechanization and the passage of the Fair Wage Act have driven thousands of uneducated, unskilled individuals from the plantation and left them jobless, thereby, pushing them further down the poverty scale. For these individuals, earning a decent living is virtually impossible.

Unemployment is a factor nationwide, but the paramount factor affecting rural poor people is that they have no skills to compete in the job market for existing jobs.

It is quite evident that if poor people are ever to rise above the smothering stench of poverty, it will not be through social handouts, but through their own sincere efforts.

The road out of poverty is long and besieged by many obstacles set up by a system designed to make the rich richer and the poor poorer. Past experience in working with rural poor people has made it quite evident that many of them

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have the determination needed to become successful and are not strangers to hard work for they have been poor all of their lives and have had to work hard to earn the meager incomes upon which they exist. But no matter how much determination a fighter has to win, he will not win unless he has the tools he needs to fight with. The tools rural people need are job skills. These skills can only be acquired through vocational training. It is a fact that all rural poor people are not ready for vocational training. This project was designed to deal with that group who was ready.

It became apparent quite early that the transition from farm work to that of industrialization created new problems for the rural poor. Many employers felt that it was impossible for these individuals to adjust to new time schedules and more job responsibilities. However, there was little doubt in our minds because poor semi-illiterate rural individuals have demonstrated that they have the ability to adjust to changing concepts for many years. They made the adjustment from the mule to the tractor, from hand harvesting to machine harvesting, and it is noteworthy to take in account that they not only learned to operate modern farm equipment but also learned to repair it. This is proof that the rural poor can adjust, but the employer must not expect the adjustment to be made overnight. The rural poor needs understanding and guidance. This guidance was built into the project in the form of vocational counseling, both premininary and on-going. We recognized the need for supportive services but had insufficient funds to supply them. However,

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some supportive services were offered through linkage with other agencies. Academic elevation was offered through our Adult Basic Education component.

Individuals who did not qualify for vocational training because of age, lack of interest or other factors were placed directly on jobs as slots became available. Those who did not qualify because of illiteracy were referred to our ABE component until they had reached an academic level acceptable for vocational training. On-the job training slots were also untilized when available.

The project was a success because the destiny of many rural poor individuals have been changed due to its existence.

The project was hampered, however, by a great insufficiency of funds. As a result many needed services could not be given and many needy persons had to be excluded. Those who were touched by our project have benefited in that they are now on better jobs or in training for jobs that will make living a bit easier for them, and will allow them to become tax payers rather than tax liabilities. They have by no means reached the top of the hill, but they are being equipped with the tools they need to get there.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Job development programs should be funded on at least a three year basis.

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RATIONALE:

A. Continuous on-the-job counseling and follow-up should be on-going for two years on each job placement.

B. When programs are funded on a yearly basis too much time is taken in fund securing processes and close out procedures. A maximum of nine months can actually be spent in project implementation.

C. The job developer has no job security and needs to spend much of these nine months finding a job for himself.

D. In one year only short-range program evaluation can be made. The real success or failure of the project can only be determined over a period of two or three years.

2. Job development programs must have funds for supportive services.

RATIONALE:

A. It must be kept in mind that rural poor poor people are just that, "poor". They must have some means of providing for their families while they are training for a vocation and until they receive their first paycheck.

B. In most instances finding a new job means relocation. They need assistance in making this adjustment.

C. Transportation also creates a problem for poor people because in most cases they have no money to pay for transportation to and from training site.

3. Sufficient funds must be available to buy vocational training from vocational training schools and manpower training sites.

RATIONALE:

A. Manpower training centers can only facilitate a token number of needy individuals during normal operation, but additional

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slots can be bought on a buy-in basis.

B. Manpower training centers are completely controlled by the Mississippi State Employment Service and in many areas they are all but hostile toward other manpower programs.

4. Provisions for child care should be built into the budget.

RATIONALE:

A. About twenty percent (20%) of rural poor families have female heads of households. These mothers need money to pay for child care while they attend vocational training sessions.

5. The promotion of a closer coalition of state and federal manpower related agencies on a local level by the national organizations.

RATIONALE:

A. If local federally funded poverty programs are to work successfully in the Mississippi Delta with other state and local federally funded programs, the tactics must be worked out on the national level because poverty programs efforts to cooperate with these agencies on a local level, in most instances, are futile and at best they are given the polite run-around.

6. Job development programs should cover smaller areas, or if there is a massive structure it should be broken up into smaller components that have the administrative and financial capability to function on its own.

RATIONALE:

A. One of the falicies of poverty programs have been that they have tried to spread their resources too thin. As a result they have touched many people but have helped very few. It is not better to cover a small area and do the job well, than to cover a large area and get nothing done.

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ORGANIZATION AND DESIGN

The project was designed to provide technical assistance and guidance to rural underprivileged people between the ages of 18 and 55, in their quest to upgrade their economic and social status through vocational training and industrial job placement. Each participant must have come from a rural environment and were unemployed or underemployed. The participants were mostly male. The project was designed to serve a male/female ratio of 3:2, but most females were denied vocational training because of the local CEP Board would not concede any female training slots to our agency. There were no provisions in our budget to pay for vocational training from other training agencies; so most females were referred to our Adult Basic Education component.

The adult basic learning centers were used as a staging point for vocationally interested students. Each participant spent a minimum of three weeks in the adult learning center. During that time he received pre-vocational counseling and assessment and orientation. He was then moved to the vocational training site. The training process was monitored very closely by the job developer. Counseling and follow-up were ongoing throughout the training period.

Supportive services in the form of stipends and transportation allowances were obtained through linkage with Mississippi Delta Council for Migrant Farmworkers and the local CEP Board regulating the Manpower Development Training Association in the Delta area.

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Through contacts with the local and statewide industrial job market, direct job placement was made available to those participants who did not qualify for vocational training or had too many responsibilities to survive on the stipends paid to vocational trainees. These participants were also placed in adult learning centers for assessment, orientation and pre-vocational counseling for a minimum of three weeks. After this period had expired they were removed from the center and placed on jobs suited to their individual capabilities as slots became available. Continuous follow-up was done on each participant and assistance and counseling given when needed throughout the training process.

On-the-job training slots were also utilized as they became available through our contacts and through the local State Employment Service. These participants were taken through the same process as vocational trainees and direct placement participants.

PERSONNEL

The personnel for "Jobs 1972" consisted of:

1 Job Developer
2 Recruiters
4 Center Directors

The job developer spent full time establishing contacts with both local and statewide manpower related agencies in an effort to acquaint them with the activities of our project and to establish linkage with them so that the project might benefit from their resources and thereby, provide more services for the people we serve. Much of his time was also spent seeking

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and securing slots from vocational training agencies and industrial employers. He was also responsible for on-the-job counseling, follow-up, and project/employer rapport.

The recruiters spent full time in the rural communities recruiting participants for the project, making surveys and collecting data. They also assisted the participants in securing physical transportation to and from the training site. They were delegated the responsibility of doing follow-up when the job developer was tied up with other matters.

The center directors were responsible for the assessment, orientation and screening of participants to be served by the "jobs" project. They also assisted the job developer in seeking local slots for vocational training and job placement.

PROBLEMS

1. Insufficient operational funds. There were no provisions in our budget for stipends, transportation allowances, supportive services, or funds to buy vocational training slots. We found ourselves on the mercies of the local State Employment Service and other local and state manpower related agencies to train participants for us. We had no bargaining power with which to negotiate and were forced to accept what they were willing to give. A good job development program must be self-sufficient, and its success or failure measured on its own merits.

2. Local branches of the Mississippi State Employment Services were willing to cooperate in most instances. Our personnel were met with everything from a polite run-around to direct hostility. The employment service felt that our project

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was in competition with their agency.

3. In areas where the State Employment Service was cooperative, only a token number of our participants were able to enter vocational training because the Manpower Development Training Association is completely controlled in the Delta area by the CEP Board. The CEP Board is afraid of over loading the job market with skilled people. The economic system of the Delta, or the nation for that matter, has never been known to suffer because of an excess number of skilled individuals in the job market. In many locations the CEP Board is in coalition with the farmers and dedicated to the perpetuation of the vicious poverty cycle from which rural poor people are now so desperately struggling to free themselves. Little effort is being exerted by this agency to recruit and train the rural poor for jobs that will enable them to climb up the economic ladder.

4. The transition from life and work on the plantation to that of industrialization is not easy for the rural poor. To place them on jobs and leave them without supportive service is futile. Few if any could succeed under a system designed to bar them from the mainstream of life. They need constant counseling and guidance until they have completely adjusted to their new way of life. This is impossible in programs funded on a yearly basis.

5. It was virtually impossible to get any females into the manpower training sites through CEP Board. We were told that they already had enough female applicants to fill all slots that may become available within the next two or three

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years. Commercial training agencies were willing to train female participants, but the participants could not afford to pay the cost of training.

ACTIVITIES

Recruitment

Participants were recruited from the outlying communities of the nine county area served by the project. Special emphasis was placed on male participants between the ages of 18 and 35 because of higher job placement potentials after vocational training has ended. However, older participants were accepted by the project if they met all other qualifications and demonstrated an interest and ability to learn. All recruited participants were either non-employed or underemployed. The following methods of recruitment were used:

1. Door to door campaign staged by recruiters;
2. Contacts through county advisory boards;
3. Contacts at local county and community meetings;
4. Contacts and linkage with other poverty programs;
5. Leaflets.

Pre-Vocational Counseling

Pre-vocational counseling was administered by our adult basic education component in the adult learning centers. It consisted of ten (10) four-hour sessions. These sessions were geared toward:

1. Teaching the participants the basic mechanics of getting a job.
   a. filling out job application forms
   b. writing letters of application

c. preparing for the job interview

2. Briefing particpants on techniques of maintaining a job.

a. participants role as an employee
b. what he should expect from the employer
c. what the employer will expect from him
d. benefits he should expect from the job

Assessment and Orientation

Assessment and orientation cycles were set up on a two week basis with a new cycle beginning every ten working days. During those two weeks each participant was tested, screened and aided by the counselors in choosing a vocation that was best suited to his capabilities. This service was administered by the local office of CEP for all trainees receiving vocational training through Manpower Development Training sites in the Mississippi Delta. All other participants received this service through our Adult Basic Education component in the Adult Learning Centers.

Vocational Training

Vocational training was implemented mostly through the Manpower Development Training Association's training sites scattered across the Mississippi Delta. The number of participants ready for training and the demand for trained labor are far greater than the manpower centers are willing or have the capacity to train. In many areas of the Delta the manpower training sites are all but smothered out by the stringent limitations placed upon them by the CEP Boards. Other vocational training slots came through linkage with other programs. Negotiations were made to buy vocational training from commerical

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training schools, but funds never became available to implement those plans.

On-the-Job Training and Direct Job Placement

On-the-job training did not rank high on our list of services because we did not have funds to pay stipends. However, through linkage with Mississippi Delta Council for Farm Workers Opportunities, Incorporated, we were able to utilize 15 slots that became available to the project through contacts with contractors in the target area. Many slots had to be refused because of this lack of funds. Direct job placement played a fairly large role in the success of the project. Staff personnel spent long hard hours canvassing the target area and the Mississippi Gulf Coast, establishing working relationships with industrial leaders and selling our project to them. As a result 66 participants were placed on meaningful jobs. This project looked with a critical eye upon "dead end" jobs for all but the extremely illiterate and participants who were too old to successfully build new careers. Our entire philosophy was centered around the idea of placing men on jobs as laborers today; hopeful that through the full utilization of their abilities, they may become foremen and managers tomorrow.

On-the-Job Counseling and Follow-up

On-the-job counseling and follow-up are paramount needs of any job development project, for participants with rural farm work backgrounds have many problems in making the transition to an industrial way of earning a living. Our job counseling and follow-up activities were designed to:

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1. Aid the participant in solving problems either on or off the job that affect his job performance;

2. Identify problems in the work situation that were not anitcipated in the pre-vocational counseling program;

3. Determine errors made in earlier counseling and job choice;

4. Identify additional services needed by the participant both on and off the job;

5. Provide a feedback of success or failure information to the staff members of the project. Through this system corrective actior was introduced into the projects, placement activities and pre-vocational curriculum, making them more adaptable to participant's needs. This service was provided by our job development staff and job counselors employed by local CEP agencies.

Achievements

A chart showing the achievements of this project is attached to this report.

DOC PROJECT "JOBS" DATA CHART

COUNTY	MDTA		OJT		DJP		REFERRALS		COUNTY TOTALS
	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE*	
BOLIVAR	5	0	2	1	8	4	2	2	24
ISSAQUENA/SHARKEY	15	0	3	0	10	7	3	2	40
MADISON	0	0	2	0	4	2	1	1	10
TALLAHATCHIE	10	0	2	3	4	0	1	1	21
WASHINGTON	11	0	2	0	9	7	0	0	29
YAZOO	0	0	0	0	10	2	1	1	14
TOTALS	41	0	11	4	45	22	8	7	138

CODES: MDTA - MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT TRAINING ASSOCIATION
OJT - ON THE JOB TRAINING
DJP - DIRECT JOB PLACEMENT

* Female referrals not shown on this chart were to the Adult Basic Education component of our project, and are accounted for in that section of the report.

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PROGRAM

EVALUATION

DELTA OPPORTUNITIES CORPORATION

by

THOMAS E. HILL, CONSULTANT

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to assist the director, staff and HEW in assessing the failures and triumphs of Delta Opportunities Corporation's (DOC) efforts in Adult Basic Education (ABE) and Job Development. From this assessment, future strategies in ABE and Job Development can be projected.

OBJECTIVES

1. To provide an independent look at programmatic activities;
2. To project future strategies in ABE and Job Development.

SUMMARY

DOC was chartered to serve Bolivar, Issaquena, Leflore, Madison, Sharkey, Washington, Tallahatchie, and Yazoo Counties.

Funding permitted the operation of single centers in Bolivar, Madison, and Yazoo counties and a tri-program in the Tallahatchie center, operated jointly by DOC, Quitman County Centers for Learning (QCCL) and Mississippi Delta Council (MDC).

DOC's program was funded through a proposal which outlined ten (10) broad objectives. Evaluation will be keenly centered around activities relating to these ten (10) objectives.

The four learning centers was very successful in reaching and recruiting participants which traditional structured centers of learning were unable or didn't want to reach. Apparently this success can be attributed to the facts that (1) classes were in a setting familiar to the participants; (2) classes were conducted by the participants peer (para-profes-

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sionals) and (3) subject matter was relevant to participants' everyday life situation.

Initially, DOC was funded to operate a correspondence course in ABE subjects. To succeed in correspondence, the participant must (1) be highly motivated initially; (2) must have great patience and self discipline; (3) must have a source of continuous motivation and (4) must have already developed functional skills in reading and writing. Admittedly, correspondence has its place in education and very doubtful at the ABE level. DOC was very wise in obtaining a program change from Correspondence to put more emphasis on center activities.

In interviewing the Director, staff and random participants, it was noted that DOC shifted emphasis from academic ABE to pre-vocational ABE during the grant year. Again this was a wise thing to do. There is one sure and direct way to effect a desirable change of persons in poverty and that is to prepare them for and obtain them employment.

DOC established two components - the ABE and Job Development. These two components, through design, worked very jointly and cooperatively.

The ABE Component prepared participants for GED, taught pre-vocational classes and prepared dropouts for college entrance. The Job Development Component made direct job placements, secured vocational training for participants, and worked with other programs to obtain stipends for those who qualified.

FINDINGS

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EFFECTS OF EXPERIMENTAL MATERIALS

It was demonstrated that student achievement was higher under conditions which made maximum use of student-teacher prepared materials than under conditions which made maximum use of commercially produced materials. Conclusions can be drawn that involvement of students in the preparation of materials followed by the use of these materials.

1. Enhanced motivation;
2. Helped to clarify instructional objectives;
3. Resulted in positive changes in student attitude toward self, participation in ABE, and the application of knowledge to solve the crucial and critical problems of living and survival.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

The project was highly successful in terms of overall student achievement and participation. This success can be traced to:

1. Widespread community support and acceptance;
2. An increase in male enrollment;
3. Increase emphasis of student involvement in curricular planning.

On the basis of in depth interviews with participants it was clear that the program was successful in developing motivation to succeed, in enhancing positive self-concepts and in increasing social and community awareness.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TEACHER COMPETENCE

Through the procedures established for implementing the program and achieving the project objectives, the concept

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of recruiting and training "para-professional" without regard to levels of educational attainment was found to be a viable one.

Examination of the activities, development, motivation, professionalism and job comprehensiveness of the instructional staff showed that the teachers in the DOC Learning Centers were as competent if not more so (in terms of professional skills, instructional leadership and levels that student performance achieved) than is usually the case in adult basic education or in the programs of youth education.

It is believed that the multi-format combination of opportunities for staff development and weekly staff development workshops which provided systematic and continuing opportunity for professional development and the screening criteria centered on attitude, empathy and commitment, rather than on level of educational attainment, were the factors primarily responsible for the successful demonstration of the effectiveness of pre-professional teachers in ABE.

COMMUNITY AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Positive developments were noted in relation to the community development outcomes of the project, meaningful change was small in relation to the magnitude of the problems and needs.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of the foregoing evaluation of accomplishments and findings the following conclusions can be made.

1. The development and use of student-teacher generated materials have an important role in ABE;

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2. Learning in isolation (Correspondence) is less satisfactory in achieving the goals of ABE than learning which is based on a variety of individual and group methods and techniques;

3. Effective instructional leadership for ABE can best be recruited from within the ranks of the poor if criteria are employed to select with a higher than student level of reading ability, dedication to the goals and philosophy of ABE, empathy, and intense motivation to succeed;

4. ABE oriented toward job development and employment is needed by the Mississippi Delta Poor more than traditional "readin' 'n' ritin" ABE;

5. Constructive change in community organization, environment and living can be a significant outcome of ABE.

Since the HEW/ABE project of DOC experienced initial problems and difficulties in terms of management, community relationships and program operations, the actual time of demonstration activities of the project does not correspond to the grant period.

During the demonstration period much has been learned in terms of staff development, leadership training, community relations and most importantly how to design and operate an effective demonstration in ABE/Job Development.

Hundreds of heretofore illiterate and semi-literate adults have moved into the literate world and some into gainful employment. In doing so, they have increased their self perceptions, deepened their sense of citizenship responsibilities, affected constructive community change, and acquired the problem solving skills and levels of knowledge needed to bring much needed improvements in their own lives.

The impact of desirable changes in family living upon the children of the participants constitutes one of the practi-

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cal benefits of the project which is of incalculable value.

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the foregoing findings and conclusions the following recommendations are made:

1. That the findings regarding the superiority of student-teacher generated materials when used in combination with selected commercial materials be widely disseminated to all programs in ABE;

2. That more instructional personnel for ABE be recruited from among the poor using the selection criteria as developed in this project.

3. That there should be closer ties between centers and the central staff for direction, administrative support, etc.;

4. That ABE programs be designed with job development activities, constructive community change and community leadership development as integral parts;

5. That Delta Opportunities Corporation Learning Centers be continued to:

   a. Capitalize on the efficient progress now being made;

   b. Because of the project has now achieved success in terms of its demonstration purposes as well as in terms of significantly raising the literacy and ability levels among the disadvantaged, it would be self-defeating if its even greater potential contributions of the immediate future were withdrawn from the community at this point in time.

6. That federal funding agencies i.e. HEW implement a system by which worthwhile and needed projects as Delta Opportunities Corporation can continue to be funded. I suggest that 120 days prior to program year end, the funding agency and project enter into a joint effort to:

   a. Identify other sources of funding;

   b. Use its governmental influence and expertise in negotiating for the needed funds.